

THE PAINSLEY CATHOLIC ACADEMY



The Painsley Catholic Academy Better Together

Mobile Technology and Social Media Policy

September 2023

Approved by:	Board of Directors	Date: September 2023
Last reviewed on:	September 2023	
Next review due by:	September 2024	

Context

This mobile technology and social media policy for Painsley Catholic College has been approved by the board of directors in line with national and local need to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of Painsley Catholic College community when using mobile devices or social media on site and at home.

This policy considers the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 and the local Staffordshire Safeguarding Childrens Board Multiagency Partnership procedures.

This policy applies to learners, parents/carers and all staff, including the local governing body and board of directors, leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the setting (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy). This policy applies to all access to and use of mobile technology and social media, both on and offsite.

Aims

The purpose of Painsley Catholic College mobile technology and social media policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of Painsley Catholic College community when using mobile devices or social media on site and at home. The policy aims to ensure that we, as a Catholic school, uphold the Catholic Social Teaching of Human Dignity. Every person's life and dignity must be respected and supported from conception until the end of their natural life on earth. Human Dignity is about ensuring that there is nothing which prevents an individual from growing and flourishing in all aspects of their being and recognising and speaking out and acting when this is not so.

Painsley Catholic College recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all learners and staff are protected from potential harm when using mobile technology or social media. This policy links closely with our online safety policy [Policies - Painsley Catholic College](#)

Painsley Catholic College identifies that the mobile devices, such as computers, tablets, mobile phones, smart watches and games consoles, and social media, are an important part of everyday life, which present positive and exciting opportunities, as well as challenges and risks.

Painsley Catholic College will empower our learners to acquire the knowledge needed to use the mobile technology and social media in a safe, considered and respectful way, and develop their resilience so they can manage and respond to online risks.

Painsley Catholic College will advise our staff through this policy, the online safety policy, the safeguarding policy and the staff code of conduct to ensure they safeguard themselves to protect their reputation and the reputation of the Multi-Academy Company.

Painsley Catholic College will offer support to parents in keeping children safe when using mobile technology and social media outside of school.

Monitoring

Technology evolves and changes rapidly. We will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.

We will regularly monitor computer violations via our current policy and procedures and evaluate these policies and procedures to ensure they are consistently applied.

To ensure full oversight of online safety, Mrs Waugh - Principal and Mr Darren Bullock – Designated Safeguard Lead will be informed of online safety concerns.

The named governor for safeguarding is Mr D Bullock. The governor will be updated through termly governors' reports, LGB safeguarding visits, the principal's report to governors and committee safeguarding meetings. The Board of Directors will receive copies of this information and challenge as appropriate.

Any issues identified via the reports and meetings above will be included in the schools safeguarding implementation plan and resolved in a timely manner.

Responding to policy breaches

All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns. This may be through:

- Parents directly contacting the safeguarding team using the wellbeing email address or emailing the DSL directly. Alternatively they could go through the child's Pastoral Lead.
- Emailing the Executive Leadership if they do not feel that progress is being made through the school via: tellus@painsley.staffs.sch.uk
- Children have the opportunity to speak to any member of staff, can go through Emmaus tutor, Pastoral Lead, or directly to the safeguarding team. If outside of school they can email through the wellbeing email address on the website.
- Following the school's complaints policy [Policies - Painsley Catholic College](#)
- Staff will follow the school procedures set out in the safeguarding policy by using the "My Concern Portal"

All members of the community will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.

Staff will be informed of our whistleblowing procedure if they feel that any breaches are not being addressed as appropriate.

We require staff, parents/carers and learners to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.

If appropriate, after any investigations are completed, leadership staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.

If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL (or deputy) will seek advice from ESAS (Education Safeguarding Advice Service).

Where there is a concern that illegal activity has taken place, we will contact the police using 101, or 999 if there is immediate danger or risk of harm.

Use of personal devices

Expectations

Painsley Catholic College recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is part of everyday life for many learners, staff and parents/carers. Mobile technology needs to be used safely and appropriately within the setting.

All use of mobile technology, including mobile phones and personal devices including wearable technology (such as 'smart watches' and fitness trackers which facilitate communication or have the capability to record sound or imagery), will take place in accordance with our policies.

Electronic devices of any kind that are brought onto site are the responsibility of the user. All members of Painsley Catholic College community are advised to:

- Take steps to protect their mobile phones or personal devices from loss, theft or damage; we accept no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such items on our premises.
- Use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised access cannot be made. Passwords and pin numbers should be kept confidential and mobile phones and personal devices should not be shared.

Personal mobile phones and other personal devices are not permitted to be used onsite unless under the direct supervision of a member of staff. **Mobile phones should be turned off while children are present during the school day.** If a learner needs to contact his/her parents or carers whilst on site, they will be allowed to use the School office phone in reception. If parents require contact with their child during the school day, this must be done via the school office rather than contacting their child directly via a mobile phone.

The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content via mobile phones or personal devices is forbidden by any member of the community; any breaches will be dealt with in line with our anti-bullying and behaviour policies.

All members of Painsley Catholic College are advised to ensure that their mobile phones and personal devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or would otherwise contravene our behaviour or safeguarding policies. **Staff**

Members of staff will ensure that use of any personal phones and mobile devices will take place in accordance with the law, as well as relevant policy and procedures including the staff code of conduct.

Staff will be advised to:

- keep mobile phones and personal devices in a safe and secure place during lesson time.
- keep mobile phones and personal devices switched off or switched to 'silent' mode during lesson times.
- ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication, such as 'airdrop', are hidden or disabled during lesson times.
- not use personal devices during teaching periods.

Staff will only use Painsley Catholic College provided equipment (not personal devices): ☑ to take photos or videos of learners in line with our image use policy.

- to work directly with learners during lessons/educational activities.
- to communicate with parents and carers.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The Principal will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements but these must be agreed.

Staff provided with school mobile phones may use the phones in school (with the exception of the EYFS areas) if their use relates to school business. Photos of pupils may be taken on school mobile phones as long as they are immediately deleted once downloaded to school equipment. Any images/footing must not be downloaded to personal equipment under any circumstances. School mobile phones can be requested to be handed in immediately to review content if there are any concerns at any point by a line manager/Chair of Governors/Director.

If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our disciplinary policy.

If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device, or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

Learners

Learners will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of personal devices and mobile phones and will be made aware of boundaries and consequences. This will be done through the RSHE curriculum and pastoral/citizenship curriculum.

Mobile phones or personal devices will not be used on site by learners at any time, unless as part of an approved and directed curriculum-based activity with consent from a member of staff.

Where learners' mobile phones or personal devices are used when learning at home, such as in response to local or full lockdowns, this will be in accordance with school rules

Mobile phones and personal devices must not be kept on their person during examinations. Learners found in possession of a mobile phone or personal device which facilitates communication or internet access during an exam will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This may result in the withdrawal from either that examination or all examinations.

Any concerns regarding learners use of mobile technology or policy breaches will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies.

Staff may confiscate a learner's mobile phone or device if they believe it is being used to contravene our child protection, behaviour or anti-bullying policy.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows the school to search a pupil's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Mobile phones and devices that have been confiscated will be held in the school office and released to parents/carers.

Appropriate sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented in line with our behaviour policy.

Concerns regarding policy breaches by learners will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate.

If there is suspicion that material on a learner's personal device or mobile phone may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be handed over to the police for further investigation.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Any form of sexual violence or harassment including but not limited to:
 - Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos) Upskirting
 - Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

Visitors

Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, who are on site for regular or extended periods of time are expected to use their mobile phones and personal devices in accordance with this policy and other associated policies.

Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns and inform the DSL or Principal of any breaches of our policy.

Painsley Catholic College is committed to encouraging parents to attend and participate in school events such as school plays and productions. We understand that parents may wish to record images for long-term personal memories. Therefore, parents can take images of their child(ren) if they so wish at school events. However, they can

only be taken of their own children (whilst recognising others may be in the background) for personal use and must not be published on social media due to privacy and safeguarding reasons. If the school finds that image(s) are posted on social media, the school will ask for the immediate removal of the image from the social media platform(s). This is to protect children and ensure that GDPR legislation is not broken. The school respectfully reserves the right to ban images being taken at such events if this policy is not followed. Staff will not take images on personal devices under any circumstances as per our mobile phone policy but may take images using school equipment such as laptops/business phones etc.

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including directors, governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

Use their phone to make contact with other parents

Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

Use of Social Media

Expectations

The expectations' regarding safe and responsible use of social media applies to all members of Painsley Catholic College community.

The term social media may include (but is not limited to) blogs, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms and instant messenger apps or services.

All members of Painsley Catholic College community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.

All members of Painsley Catholic College community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.

We will control learner and staff access to social media whilst using provided devices and systems on site. This is done through the use of the software packages SENSO and Netsweeper in our school.

The use of social media use during school hours for personal use is not permitted for staff.

The use of social media during school hours for personal use is not permitted for learners.

Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Painsley Catholic College community on social media, will be reported to the DSL and/or the Principal and will be managed in accordance with the staff code of conduct.

Staff

Safe and professional online behaviour is outlined for all members of staff, including volunteers, as part of our code of conduct policy and any breaches will be taken seriously and in line with the staff code of conduct.

Any allegations that are a cause for concern regarding a member of staff's online conduct will be discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

If appropriate, disciplinary, civil and/or legal action will be taken.

All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within Painsley Catholic College.

All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media services. It is expected that all staff that use social media are:

- Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites.
- Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services.
- Opting out of public listings on social networking sites.
- Logging out of accounts after use.
- Using strong passwords.
- Ensuring they do not represent their personal views as being that of the setting.

All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online. Staff are expected to ensure that their social media use is compatible with our Catholic ethos and their professional role and is in accordance with our policies, and the wider professional and legal framework.

Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about learners and their family members or colleagues, will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.

Members of staff will notify the Principal and DSL immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact learners or parents/carers, nor should any contact be accepted.

All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past learners or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media sites, applications or profiles.

If ongoing contact with learners is required once they have left the setting, members of staff will be expected to use existing alumni networks, or use official setting provided communication tools.

Any communication from learners and parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL or Principal.

Learners

Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to learners as part of an embedded and progressive educational approach using age appropriate sites and resources.

Learners will be advised:

- to consider the benefits and risks of sharing personal details or information on social media sites which could identify them and/or their location.
- to only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private.
- not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other appropriate adults' permission, and to only do so when a trusted adult is present.
- to use safe passwords.
- to use social media sites which are appropriate for their age and abilities.
- how to block and report unwanted communications.
- how to report concerns on social media, both within the setting and externally.

Any concerns regarding learners use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

The DSL (or deputy) will respond to online safety concerns involving safeguarding or child protection risks in line with our safeguarding policy.

Sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented and offered to learners as appropriate, in line with our behaviour policy.

Concerns regarding learners use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

Official use of social media

Painsley Catholic College official social media channels are: Facebook and Twitter

The official use of social media sites by Painsley Catholic College only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives and with specific intended outcomes.

Staff use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage official social media channels.

Official social media sites are suitably protected.

Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies.

All communication on official social media platforms by staff on behalf of the setting will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny.

Members of staff who follow and/or like our official social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professional accounts where possible, to avoid blurring professional boundaries.

If members of staff are participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting, they will:

- Be aware they are an ambassador for the setting.
- Be professional, responsible, credible, fair and honest, and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and equalities laws.
- Ensure appropriate consent has been given before sharing images on the official social media channel.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the setting, unless they are authorised to do so.
- Not engage with any private/direct messaging with current or past learners or parents/carers.
- Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputy) and the Principal of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from learners.

Links with other policies

This policy links with several other policies, including but not limited to:

- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Acceptable use of the Internet
- CCTV Policy
- Data Protection and Information Security Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Response to Incidents of ICT Misuse Policy
- Use of Digital and Video Images Policy

Monitoring and Review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You must switch off your mobile phone as soon as you enter school premises (not just put on 'silent').
2. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
12. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store these appropriately, or turn them over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to [insert location] ➤ Do not take photos or recordings of pupils
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when around pupils.

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.